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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/586,481	06/01/2000	Klaus Gettwart	P00.0937	8302

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EXAMINER
CHARLES, DEBRA F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3629	

DATE MAILED: 10/28/2002

Ple[redacted] find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/586,481	GETTWART ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Debra F. Charles	3629	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *01 June 2000* .

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) *3* .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

Claims 1-17 have been examined.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: Under the heading, Field of the Invention, in the last sentence the phrase "are suited for sue with multiple carriers" is not a clear statement. The Examiner is unsure what the applicant is referring to here.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1–13 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gil et al. (US 5586037 A).

As per claim 1 and 9, Gil et al. disclose a method for processing postal matter comprising the steps of (Gil et al., Abstract, Cols. 1-18):

providing a receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) allowing a customer to deposit a postal item and to enter shipping data for said postal item into said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and, at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), printing a machine-readable marking on said postal item representing said shipping data, to produce a marked postal item(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60), and temporarily storing said marked postal item at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65, Cols. 1-18);
transporting said marked postal item to a distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), remote from said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), and providing a franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60), and a memory accessible by said franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60) at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), and transferring said shipping data from said marking into said memory at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65); and

franking said postal item with said franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60) at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) according to said shipping data transferred from said marking and stored in said memory to produce a franked postal item.

Official Notice is taken that storing data in said memory is old and well-known in the computer art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to implement Gil et al.'s invention with computer memory to store data in order to get the advantage of producing a postal franking on the item to be mailed.

As per claims 2 and 10, Gil et al. disclose a method as claimed in claims 1 and 9 wherein said memory at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) is a first memory, and said method comprising(Gil et al., Abstract, Cols. 1-18):
at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), providing a first read/write unit and a normally closed slot for inserting said postal item, and providing a normally closed removal port for removing said marked postal item from said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65);
said customer inserting a customer-possessed card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60), into said read/write unit; enabling opening of said slot to allow said postal item to be deposited at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) while said customer-possessed card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is in said read/write unit;
generating a number at said read/write unit uniquely allocated to the postal item deposited by said customer(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 20-26);
printing said number on said postal item together with said marking at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65);
providing a second memory at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and storing said number and said shipping data, as accounting data, in said second memory; for removing said postal item from said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), inserting a carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) possessed by a first mail carrier, having a carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) memory, into said first read/write unit at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and loading said accounting data from said second memory into said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) memory;
enabling opening of said removal port at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) while said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14,

Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is inserted in said first read/write unit and removing said marked postal item from said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35 65);
wherein the step of transporting said marked postal item to said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) comprises transporting said marked postal item to said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) via said first mail carrier together with said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39 67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60);
providing a second read/write unit at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and inserting said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) into said second write/read unit and downloading said accounting data from said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) memory into said first memory;
providing a sensor and feeder stage upstream from said franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60) at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and entering said marked postal item into said sensor and feeder stage;
after franking said marked postal item with said franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60) at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), printing a list at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) identifying said postal item as having been franked; and
said first mail carrier transporting said franked postal item from said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), together with said list, to a mail distribution(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 5, Lines 45-60) center remote from said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65); and
from said mail distribution(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 5, Lines 45-60) station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), delivering said franked postal item to a recipient identified by said shipping data via a second mail carrier(Gil et al., Abstract, Cols. 1-18).

As per claim 3, Gil et al. disclose a method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said customer-possessed card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is a value card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60).

As per claims 4 and 13, Gil et al. disclose a method as claimed in claims 2 and 9 further comprising providing a sensor at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) which detects deposit of said postal item at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) through said slot, and providing a clock/date module(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 6, Lines 15-25)at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), which, depending on a signal from said sensor, identifies a time and date at which

said postal item was deposited at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65); and
storing said time and date in said second memory at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) allocated to said number and said shipping data(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, lines 19-26, Col. 18, Lines 20-25).

As per claims 5 and 11, Gil et al. disclose method as claimed in claims 2 and 9 wherein said customer-possessed card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is a value card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60), and comprising the steps of:
at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), providing a plurality of sensors(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 7, Lines 1-30) for respectively identifying a format of said postal item, a thickness of said postal item and a weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45) of said postal item, and providing a postal calculation unit at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65);
supplying said postal calculation unit at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) with signals from said plurality of sensors(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 7, Lines 1-30) and, in said postal calculation unit, calculating a cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67) of shipping said item dependent on said shipping data, said format, said thickness and said weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45); and
debiting said value card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) in said read/write unit by said cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67).

As per claim 6, Gil et al. disclose a method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said customer-possessed card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is a customer card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) containing an identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)uniquely allocated to a customer, and comprising the steps of:
reading said identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)from said customer card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) in said first read/write unit and storing said identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)in said second memory at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) as part of said accounting data;
in said sensor and feeder stage at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), detecting a format, a thickness and a weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45) of said marked postal item;
providing a postal calculation unit at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and supplying said postal calculating unit with information identifying said format, thickness, weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45) and said accounting data and, in said postal calculating unit, calculating a cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67) of shipping said marked postal item from said format, thickness, weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45) and shipping data; and debiting a customer account,

identified by said identification number, by said cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67).

As per claim 7, Gil et al. disclosure a method as claimed in claim 6 comprising the steps of:

providing a sensor at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65)which detects deposit of said postal item at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) through said slot, and providing a clock/date module(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 6, Lines 15-25)at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) which, upon receipt(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 5-15) of a signal from said sensor, identifies a time and date(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 6, Lines 15-25, Col. 10, Lines 19-26) at which said postal item was deposited at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65); and
printing a customer receipt(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 5-15) at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) identifying said number, said time and date(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 6, Lines 15-25, Col. 10, Lines 19-26) and said shipping data and making said customer receipt(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 5-15) available to said customer at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65).

As per claim 8, Gil et al. disclose a method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said memory at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) is a first memory, and comprising the steps of:
at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), providing a first read/write unit, a normally closed slot for inserting said postal item into said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), and a normally closed removal port for removing said marked postal item from said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65);
inserting a customer card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) into said first read/write unit at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), said customer card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) containing an identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)uniquely identifying a customer, and enabling opening of said slot when said customer card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is inserted in said read/write unit;
providing a sensor at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) which senses deposit of said postal item into said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) through said slot, and providing a clock/date module(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 6, Lines 15-25)which identifies a time and date, dependent on a signal from said sensor, at which said postal item was deposited at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65);

at said first read/write unit, generating a unique number for said postal item deposited at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65);
providing a second memory at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and storing said number, said identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26), said time and date and said
shipping data in said second memory;
using a single printer at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), printing a customer receipt(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 5-15) at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) including at least said number, said time and date and said shipping data and also printing said marking including said number, said time and date and said shipping data;
inserting a carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col.15, Lines 55-60) having a carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) memory, possessed by a first mail carrier, into said first read/write unit at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and enabling opening of said removal port while said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) is inserted in said first read/write unit and transferring said number, said identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)and said shipping data to said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) memory from said second memory;
said second carrier transporting said marked postal item from said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) to said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) together with said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60); providing a second read/write unit at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and inserting said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) into said second read/write unit and downloading said number, said identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)and said shipping data from said carrier card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) memory into said first memory;
at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), scanning said machine-readable marking and identifying a weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45) of said marked postal item;
providing a postal calculating unit at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and supplying said postal calculating unit with said weight(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 3, Lines 1-45) and said shipping data and calculating a cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67) of shipping said marked postal item in said postal calculating unit;
franking said marked postal item with said cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67) at said franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60); debiting a customer account, allocated to "said identification number, by said cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67); and

said first mail carrier transporting said franked postal item to a mail distribution(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 5, Lines 45-60) center,remote from said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), and delivering said franked postal item to a recipient identified by said shipping data via a second mail carrier(Gil et al., Abstract, Cols. 1-18).

As per claim 12, Gil et al. disclose a postal matter processing system as claimed in claim 10 wherein said card(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 45-50, Col. 14, Lines 39-67, Col. 15, Lines 55-60) possessed by said customer contains a customer identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)which is read by said first read/write unit and said customer identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)is supplied to said control unit, said control unit including a clock/date module(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 6, Lines 15-25)which identifies a time and date at which said postal item was deposited at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65), and said control unit controlling said printer at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) to print a customer receipt(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 5-15) including said time and date and said customer identification number, and a customer account allocated to said customer identification number(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 10, Lines 19-26)being debited after printing said marking and before said franking at said distributing station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65).

As per claim 15, Gil et al. disclose a postal matter processing system as claimed in claim 9 wherein said franking apparatus(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 55-60) comprises a rate memory containing postal rates for calculating a cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67) of shipping said marked postal item.

As per claim 16, Gil et al. disclose a postal matter processing system as claimed in claim 9 further comprising a postal calculating unit at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) and a rate memory at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) accessible by said postal calculating unit for calculating a cost(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 9, Lines 5-67) of shipping said postal item dependent on said shipping data.

As per claim 17, Gil et al. disclose a postal matter processing system as claimed in claim 16 wherein said control unit at said receiver station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) is connected to a modem at said receiver station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) for reloading updated rates into said rate memory(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 14, Lines 39-67).

4. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gil et al. as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Cantu et al. (US 6340958 B1).

As per claim 14, Gil et al. disclose a postal matter processing system as claimed in claim 9 further comprising a solar powered energy source(Cantu et al., Abstract) at said receiving station(Gil et al., Abstract, Col. 2, Lines 35-65) for powering at least said control unit.

Gil et al. fail to disclose solar powered energy source.

Cantu et al. disclose solar powered energy source (Cantu et al., Abstract).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method of Cantu et al. to use solar powered energy source as taught by Cantu et al. to ensure consistent mailing system operation that needs no replacement batteries or electrical outlet.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Baker et al., System for Smart Card Funds Refill.

Abumehdi, Franking Machine and Franking Machine System.

Gilham, Method of and Apparatus for Generating and Authenticating Postal Indica.

Williams et al., Scientific Instrument emulator Having a Computer and an Analog Signal Interface for Real-time Signal Processing.

Sansone, Electronic Indicium and Methods of Using Same in Postal Process.

Chrosny, Postage Payment System Employing Encryption Techniques and Accounting for Postage Payment at a Time Subsequent to the Printing of Postage.

WO 97/49503, Method of Processing Postal Matters.

WO 97/40602, Secure Smart Card Access to Pre-Paid Metering Funds in Meter.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Debra F. Charles whose telephone number is (703) 305-4718. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-5 Monday thru Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John G. Weiss can be reached on (703) 308-2702. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7687 for regular communications and (703) 305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

Debra F. Charles
Examiner
Art Unit 3629

dfc
October 20, 2002

JOHN G. WEISS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600